

<p style="text-align: center;">Sustainability Commission Green Infrastructure Working Group Meeting Report</p>
--

Date: Thursday, July 17th 6pm, Historic East Baltimore Community Center

Subject: Green Infrastructure Working Group Community Conversation

In Attendance: Diana Cohen, Miriam Avins, Michael Beer, Mary Hardcastle, Kate Edwards, Alyson Taylor, Marcia Kingslow, Anne Palmer, Mackenzie Paull, Kari Smith, Brett Buikema, Louise Mitchell, Joyce Smith, Jeannette Kitchen

Discussion: The meeting began with an overview of the Baltimore Sustainability Commission and the purpose of the Green Infrastructure Working Group. The meeting then moved into a discussion of proposed goals for the Green Infrastructure portion of the plan.

Topics addressed:

- Introductions
- Review of Baltimore Sustainability Program
- Draft Goals presented

Local Food/Urban Agriculture

1. Increase purchase & consumption of local foods (by institutions, i.e. schools, hospitals, hotels, etc.)
2. Reduce average annual food-mile for Baltimore
3. Increase access to affordable, fresh fruits & vegetables for those who don't have adequate access
4. Increase public awareness of local food issues
5. Increase the amount of food production within Baltimore City limits
6. Increase/ create job opportunities in urban agriculture and related fields, i.e. distribution, culinary arts, etc.

Stormwater Management

1. Reduce the amount of run-off going into stormwater system
2. Increase use of natural stormwater management systems, i.e. more trees, bioswales, rain gardens, wetlands, etc.
3. Improve the quality of stormwater going into storm system
4. Increase the amount of stormwater to be captured and re-used
5. Increase public awareness of stormwater issues

Public Green/ Open Space / Parks

1. Increase tree canopy
2. Increase use of public parks by improving existing parks, i.e. materials, safety, equipment, programming, etc.
3. Create mechanism for preserving community managed open space, i.e. community gardens
4. Promote Alley Greening program
5. Increased public investment in parks and open space, i.e. stewardship & financial
6. Provide a space for every resident to connect with nature
7. Increase outdoor recreational events that build a sense of community
8. Make streams and water bodies the focus of safe and accessible outdoor activity
9. Increase outdoor spaces where people of all ages congregate for recreation
10. Develop & promote a procedure for neighborhoods to create pocket parks

Biodiversity/ Ecology

1. Increase native plant & animal habitat
2. Reduce invasive species in public green spaces and develop a program for continued management
3. Reduce lawn & mowing in public areas & synthetic fertilizers
4. Develop composting program for city parks & public (public composting program)
5. Improve soil health on open land/ remediate toxic sites
6. Restore stream valleys & daylight existing streams

Connectivity

1. Create long term development plan for connecting open spaces in the city (Olmsted)
2. Improve streetscape conditions so that walking & biking is safe and enjoyable
3. Increase pedestrian friendly areas of the city (e.g. streets closed to traffic, greenways that feel safe for walkers)

Private Interests

1. Develop incentives for owners to contribute to sustainability goals on their land

Education

1. Develop marketing campaign to educate public about sustainability, i.e. Buy Fresh, Buy Local Banner Campaigns
2. Integrate sustainability into school system & social service system i.e. Farmer's Markets Coupons

3. Integrate food system curriculum into city schools

Discussion of Draft Goals

- Education and awareness is key
- Make people aware of why Urban Agriculture is important – Lack of access to fresh foods
- 2 models – Urban Agriculture and Community Gardens
- Look at studies to make the goals and targets we propose realistic
- Emphasize private backyard as well for a place for people to grow their own food
- Need overall, comprehensive plan for Urban Agriculture
- Connect with Master Gardener program to provide training for gardeners
- List types of land the are available
- Who are the people to be targeted?
- Incentives for growing food & for selling fresh foods
- National and Global implications
- Private land is not mentioned in the vision statement, it should be included as a key element
- Quantify food value of gardens/Urban Farms
- Plant fruit trees in Public areas
- Faith Based Groups can help encourage people
- Language should focus on families
- Use the idea of community schools as community centers
- Maryland Green Schools – Environmental curriculum